



# USAF Legislative Liaison Congressional Hearing Resume

106<sup>th</sup> Congress; Second Session

**SUBJECT:** Status of Forces / Readiness

**COMMITTEE:** House Armed Services Committee (HASC)

**CHAIRMAN:** The Honorable Floyd Spence, R-SC

**DATE:** 27 Sep 00

**MEMBERS PRESENT (bold face):**

## REPUBLICANS

**Bob Stump (AZ)**  
**Duncan Hunter (CA)**  
John Kasich (OH)  
**James Hansen (UT)**  
**Curt Weldon (PA)**  
**Joel Hefley (CO)**  
**Jim Saxton (NJ)**  
**Steve Buyer (IN)**  
**Tillie Fowler (FL)**  
**John McHugh (NY)**  
James Talent (MO)  
**Terry Everett (AL)**  
**Roscoe Bartlett (MD)**  
**Buck McKeon (CA)**  
**J.C. Watts (OK)**  
**Mac Thornberry (TX)**  
**John Hostettler (IN)**  
**Saxby Chambliss (GA)**  
**Van Hilleary (TN)**  
**Joe Scarborough (FL)**  
**Walter Jones (NC)**

Lindsey Graham  
(SC)  
**Jim Ryun (KS)**  
**Bob Riley (AL)**  
**Jim Gibbons (NV)**  
**Mary Bono (CA)**  
**Joseph Pitts (PA)**  
**Robin Hayes (NC)**  
**Steve Kuykendall (CA)**  
**Donald Sherwood (PA)**

## DEMOCRATS

**Ike Skelton (MO)**  
**Norman Sisisky (VA)**  
**John Spratt (SC)**  
**Solomon Ortiz (TX)**  
**Owen Pickett (VA)**  
Lane Evans (IL)  
**Gene Taylor (MS)**  
Neil Abercrombie (HI)  
**Martin Meehan (MA)**  
**Robert Underwood (Guam)**  
Patrick Kennedy (RI)  
Rod Blagojevich (IL)  
**Silvestre Reyes (TX)**  
Tom Allen (ME)  
**Victor F. Snyder (AR)**  
Jim Turner (TX)  
Adam Smith (WA)  
**Loretta Sanchez (CA)**  
**James Maloney (CT)**  
**Mike McIntyre (NC)**

Ciro Rodriguez (TX)  
Cynthia McKinney (GA)  
**Ellen Tauscher (CA)**  
Robert Brady (PA)  
Robert Andrews (NJ)  
**Baron Hill (IN)**  
Mike Thompson (CA)  
John Larson (CT)

## **WITNESSES:**

- Gen Henry H. Shelton, USA, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS)
- Gen Michael E. Ryan, Chief of Staff of U.S. Air Force (CSAF)
- Gen Erik K. Shinseki, Army Chief of Staff
- Adm Vernon E. Clark, Chief of Naval Operations
- Gen James L. Jones, Commandant of the Marine Corps

Information contained in this resume was obtained during an open hearing. It will not be released outside of Department of Defense agencies until published hearing transcripts have been released by the Committee, and only to the extent it is in accord with published hearing procedures.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The committee met to discuss the Status of Forces/Readiness. Unlike the initial 29 Sep 98 SASC Readiness Hearing, this year's hearing was not nearly as contentious. Most Members utilized the majority of their time discussing their opinions on readiness matters and then asked questions of the witnesses. Most Members thanked the CJCS and service chiefs for appearing, for their candid testimony, and for their dedication to their service and country. The general feeling from both the Members and the Chiefs was that there is no doubt that the Armed Forces could conduct the National Military Strategy in support of the National Security Strategy. However, there was a general feeling among all that even though the "tip of the spear" (deployed) forces are ready for military operations, the "shaft" of the spear (CONUS/non-engaged forces) have readiness problems. Not one Member stated that the budget is too low or just about right; most openly cited was the need for increased defense budgets. The service chiefs declared that the risk to their forces during the first major theater war (MTW) is moderate, the risk for the 2<sup>nd</sup> MTW is high. The service chiefs sent the message that budget topline have forced us to mortgage long-term readiness (and recapitalization and modernization) for short-term readiness fixes.

The hearing was called to order at 1422.

## **OPENING REMARKS**

### **Chairman Spence**

- Opened hearing with tribute to former HASC Member, the late CM Herbert Bateman (VA)
- Cited recent CBO report that stated we must spend \$360B annually to sustain existing force levels
- Apr-Jun 2000 Readiness Report stated that overall readiness of our forces is improving
  - Risk during 1<sup>st</sup> major theater war (MTW) is moderate
  - Risk during 2<sup>nd</sup> MTW is high and possibly, impossible to carry out
- AF is arresting decline in MC rates
- We don't have enough lift of anything (air, sea, or ground)
- We are experiencing a readiness mismatch
- There is nothing unusual about this hearing
  - HASC has had these hearings the last 3 years--typically in the beginning of the year and in the Fall

### **CM Skelton**

- Are we able to perform any military task? Yes. We are performing magnificently in areas all over the globe
- Will ask the Chiefs the question, "Is your service capable of performing its duties despite the threats?"
- Congress bares the blame
- Overall readiness approximately the same as Dec 92/ early 93

## WITNESS STATEMENTS

### Gen Shelton

- Thanked CMTE for their support in pay raises, health care, readiness concerns
- We are the best military force in the world
- Force is 40% smaller than the force that won the Gulf War; force is strained
- We are spending more time maintaining equipment than in training
- We need significant plus-ups

### Gen Shinseki

- We have mortgaged our modernization efforts for years,
- 57 years old is standard revitalization of infrastructure; US Army's is 157 yrs

### Adm Clark

- Forward-deployed forces are doing the job
- Non-deployed forces readiness is "less than it ought to be"

### Gen Jones

- USMC is capable of executing wartime & peacetime responsibilities

### Gen Ryan

- Our people have succeeded in every task we've given them
- Pay raises have helped
- Increased funding for readiness is needed
- Testified in Sep 98 that the USAF needed approx \$5B in increased funding for readiness
  - We received ½ of that amount
- Readiness has not gotten better; it's just stabilized somewhat
- Mission Capable (MC) rates have decreased 10% over last decade
- We struggle with our retention rate
- Our aircraft average age is 22 years old; in 15 years, the average age will be 30--EVEN with every modernization program we hope to buy
  - The USAF has never dealt with this before
- We have mortgaged our long-term readiness for short-term readiness
- Our infrastructure is on a 250-year replacement cycle

## QUESTIONS/COMMENTS/OBSERVATIONS

### CM Hunter

- Cited **CSAF** in quote, "We have experienced an overall 14% degradation in our operational readiness of our major operational units."

### Gen Ryan-- Confirmed he had said that

- Intently questioned **Gen Shinseki** regarding readiness of 2 divisions that in 1999 claimed unready for combat operation

- Questioned **CJCS** regarding CJCS' reporting/non-reporting of the extra time the divisions need to be combat ready

Q. What about need for additional \$30B/yr for procurement in accordance with CBO study?

A. **Gen Ryan**-- \$10-11B is needed but doesn't count people (support)

### **CM Skelton**

- Don't want our adversaries, our potential adversaries or our allies to get the wrong impression

Q. So I'll ask the question of each of you: based upon the threat briefings that you have, either daily or periodically, is your service -- and in your case, **Gen Shelton**, the services combined --capable of fulfilling any mission that would be assigned to them, based upon those threats, and perform them successfully?

A. **Gen Ryan**-- Answer is yes today, but at our current recapitalization rates I'm not sure how long the answer remains yes in the future.

Q. Since our Goldwater-Nichols reform of 1986, we have embraced a greater jointness capability; am I correct?

A. **CJCS**-- I would submit that we lead the world without a doubt in that arena

I don't want our adversaries or potential adversaries to get the wrong impression

Q. Can you currently conduct 2 MTWs?

A. **CJCS**-- Yes. Today but at our current recapitalization rates, I'm not sure how long we could say that

Q. Are we the best force in the world?

A. **CJCS**-- Absolutely

Q. What is your required endstrength?

A. **Gen Ryan**-- Currently about 5,000 short of budget level and 5,000 short of that required.

Approximately 10,000 short

- Challenged service chiefs to research this for the future; discuss with future Commander-in-Chief and come back in Jan/Feb to report (to the CMTE)

### **CM Hansen**

- I need to know, "ready for what?"

- All Services talk about part parts and lack thereof

- Received letter from wife at Hill AFB. She detailed senseless accidents due to fatigue (her husband works 14 hour days); he wants to stay in, but Delta Airlines is looking more attractive

### **CM Sisisky**

- Leadership of Congress has responsibility

- Budget topline must be raised

- Concerned about federal employees due to possible A-76 actions

### **CM Weldon**

- HASC has plussed up \$43.1B (\$58B in FY00 dollars)

Q. Without that money, could you still execute the 2 MTWs?

- A. **Gen Shinseki**-- High risk on 2<sup>nd</sup> MTW
- A. **Adm Clark**-- Maybe higher than high risk--impossible?
- A. **CJCS**-- Maintaining current readiness at expense on recapitalization & modernization
- A. **Gen Ryan**-- 2<sup>nd</sup> high risk--maybe higher. Difficult to tell
- A. **Gen Jones**-- would have taken from QoL account, and "people would have voted with their feet."

- We have had 37 violations of arms agreements by Russia and China
- The Clinton Administration ignored the transfer of technology

### **CM Ortiz**

- Invited service chiefs--that if some agency (Administration or another CMTE)--doesn't help the Services, then go to the HASC for assistance
- Concerned about aging work force
- **Gen Ryan** agreed that it is a big problem, especially in depots
  - Average age of workers is 48
  - More than 50% can retire within 5 years
  - Need Congress to give us more shaping tools

### **CM Saxton**

- Concerned about lift requirements
- **Gen Ryan**-- C-5 isn't meeting MC requirements
  - Dilemma: Do we work on C-5s or add C-17s?
- Q. Interested in SOLL II mission for C-17s. How many additional C-17s do we need?
- A. There is a requirement for 15 additional C-17s

### **CM Reyes**

- The U.S. is last remaining superpower; we are looked upon as "cops on the beat"
- Concerned about "so called Peace Dividend;" Berlin Wall comes down, and we are expected to rest
- Identified 3 entities of leadership: 1) military 2) Congress 3) Executive Branch
- Concerned that these (readiness) discussions will give wrong signals to the world or raise questions of leadership from those in uniform

### **CM Buyer**

- Will work with new Administration's OMB on new A-76 guidelines
- Q. Asked CJCS if he still agreed with his earlier quote that health care is a "promise" to our people
- A. **CJCS**-- Yes

Q. Do you prefer a permanent fix for health care for those over 65?

A. **CJCS**-- Sooner rather than later

### **CM Fowler**

- Believes our nation's military is on a "verge of a crisis"
- 1/2 of readiness centers are not at high readiness
- MC rates down 10%; \$4.3B real property backlog

- Commented that billions of dollars were added by the CMTE over objections of Administration

### **CM Taylor**

- CBO has stated it will be relatively inexpensive to take care of retirees
  - Let TRICARE be second payer to Medicare to reduce out of pocket expenses
- Cited Sen Warner's proposal for those who don't live near medical facilities

Q. Would you endorse Warner's concept and/or Medicare

A. **CJCS**-- Needs to be added to topline; will look at it

### **CM McHugh**

- The true joy of the CMTE is its bipartisanship

### **CM Snyder**

- Agreed that we need BRAC
  - Stated AF has been most open on this
- Congress needs to find a way to do it better
- Recruiting is probably most difficult in this era

### **CM Jones**

Q. Do you believe aviators are getting enough time in the air?

A. **Gen Ryan**-- Some units aren't getting enough due to MC rates

- It's a tragedy in this country if we can't give pilots enough time in the air

Q. They -- you know, the standard is drawn on 20 to 25 hours a month. What's the average flying hours per pilot in each aircraft?

A. **Gen Ryan**--I have to do it by each of our category by aircraft, how many sorties and flying hours they get. But we are short (in giving them flying hours) in many of our categories. I will give you that **for the record**

### **CM Pitts**

- Operation Allied Force recognized electronic warfare (EW) as a need
- EW Working group is bipartisan group

Q. What is the current inventory of trained electronic warfare officer (EWOs)?

A. **Gen Ryan**-- Will give exact answer **for the record**. It's aging out

-- When we cut back on the EF-111 and F-4G, we also cut back on EWO training which was probably a mistake

Q. Are you doing anything to retain experienced F-4G or EF-111 EWOs?

A. **Gen Ryan**-- We are giving option of hiring them back (and not losing money working 2<sup>nd</sup> job as government employee)

Q. Recognizing the crucial importance of self-protection jammers, such as the F-15 LQ-135 and the F-16 LQ-131, and the role they play in protecting our aircraft and our air crews, have you been able to properly fund related EW procurement and sustainment accounts to ensure that we maintain and fully deploy these important capabilities? And if not, could you speak to the

amount of funding required to ensure that we do procure these systems at economic rates, deploy them, you know, at an operationally necessary pace and sustain them properly?

A. **Gen Ryan**-- The answer is we do not. We have not had enough funding to do that adequately

-- We had, within the Air Force, an electronic warfare summit where we looked at our electronic warfare needs from requirements through execution and laid out areas where we have to put much more emphasis

-- So the answer is no. And I'll provide you the amount of unfunded requirements **for the record**

### **CM Kuykendall**

- I've heard in the field that aircrews don't get to drop enough live ordnance to prepare for deployments

Q. Can you give us a list of how many satellites we need to buy

A. **Gen Ryan**-- We have recapitalization issues. They're funded well, because they are constantly up there

-- Funding has increased from 13% to 35% in research

-- Trying to get payloads into space cheaper

- Would like CMTE to be more engaged-- afraid we'll go down the wrong path buying the wrong equipment

- Funding questions (who pays for it) shouldn't get in the way (to buy space items)

- **Gen Ryan**-- There are not Title X responsibilities here. But we've stepped up to it, because it's the right thing to do

- We are going to have to examine this cost sharing in the future due to the high costs involved

### **CM Hayes**

- Disappointed that there wasn't enough candor today by service chiefs

-- Reference \$58B question by CM Weldon. The answer is NO. We couldn't conduct 2 MTWs

Q. What can we do to make sure we don't have hollow aspects (A/C with ½ loads on them, etc.) like has happened in the past?

A. **CJCS**-- We'll know more when we come out of QDR 2001

### **CM Bartlett**

- For the 2 MTW strategy, we are already had the highest level of risk (High Risk)

-- The more unready we are, there's a direct relation to the number of people we could lose

### **CM Chambliss**

- Does not appreciate the political aspects of the service chiefs' jobs

-- Doesn't understand how service chiefs could come in repeatedly and not ask for more

**Gen Ryan**, I know we're some 1,100 to 1,200 pilots short in the Air Force right now. We've got real problems out there with recruiting as well as retention

- I don't understand why you (service chiefs ) aren't in here just screaming and raising Cain about the fact that we've got some 3,500 to 5,000 troops that serve under you that are on food stamps today

- And we've tried to improve the quality of life for you folks

- Anybody defending this administration from a defense perspective is wrong



Q. , **Gen Shinseki**...How do you intend to use the Joint Stars system to support the new brigade combat team? And in this regard, is the JROC requirement of 19 aircraft enough to meet your present and future requirements?

A. **Gen Ryan**-- Right. I will answer for the record on the Joint Stars

#### **CM Hostettler**

- **Gen Ryan**, on September 20, 2000, USA Today reported in its lead story, quote, "Air Force Chief of Staff **Gen Michael Ryan** has told Congress that lengthy delays in security clearance investigations have put at risk critical Air Force programs, including one that assures the reliability of personnel who support President Clinton in Air Force One."

-- The report went on to say, "Ryan also said that delays have had an adverse impact on the nuclear weapons program. 'Without current investigations, we cannot ensure the reliability of personnel who perform such critical duties.'"

Q. Are these comments outdated?

A. **Gen Ryan**-- I made those comments back, in response to your question, in February.

-- Since that time there has been progress made in the backlog that we have in security clearances. Gen Cunningham, who is running that program, has really taken on an aggressive approach to it, and it looks like we're starting to get our nose back above the horizon here and catching back up

Q. With that in mind, taking the time to get us out, is the comment that programs are at risk, is that still relevant today? Even with the reduction in backlog, are there programs such as the nuclear weapons program and Air Force One?

A. **Gen Ryan**-- I wouldn't say that those programs are at risk now, no

#### **CW Sanchez**

Q. Does re-enlistment increase when troops are in the field?

A. **CJCS**-- If the troops feel they are doing something real and productive, their morale is higher

Q. For those 3 services that are going to be using the Joint Strike Fighter, if and when we get it on-line, what does this delay mean to you, in particular when I'm looking at this chart that shows, you know, that our TACAIR is going away from us?

A. **Gen Ryan**-- It's the only alternative for the F-16 and A-10; we want to ensure it does not slip to the right (in production)

#### **CM Weldon**

- Not particularly happy with either party in discussing national security & quality of life issues

Q. Do you believe there is enough debate on these issues?

A. **Gen Ryan**-- Believe debate is vital

- In every poll, National Security is at the bottom

#### **CM Hunter**

- Summarized that in the proposed out-year budgets (2002-2007) are based on promises of officials not yet elected

- Detailed today's forces are a lot smaller than in 1991



-- We had 24 fighter wing equivalents vs 13 fighter wing equivalents  
- Moderate risk in MTW 1; High risk in MTW 2; that means more body bags or terrain loss  
Q. Is it fair to say, compare to 1990/91, that we'll take more casualties?  
A. **CJCS**-- Yes

Q. Has it been your recommendation to the executive branch that we have increased force structure and increased expenditures on our forces? **Gen Shelton**, why don't you answer?

A. **CJCS**-- The force structure that was set, as you know, by the '97 QDR

-- As we go into this '01 QDR, we'll have a chance to review and to make a recommendation based on the QDR process

- Was told by Nellis Wing Commander that the "birthday factor." When the service members miss 3 or 4 of their kids' birthdays, they are getting out

Q. Can you do this with 13 air wings?

A. **Gen Ryan**-- I think about it every day. We can have great equipment, but if you don't have great people...

Q. Just so we leave with everybody up to speed on the status of our armed forces, **Gen Ryan**, your statement in June that we had the lowest rate of readiness in many years, that statement still stands, does it not, for your aircraft?

A. Right. For all practical purposes we are leveling out, but we have not started to climb back up

### **CM Skelton**

- "The buck stops here." Congress has the responsibility for increasing resources

### **TASKINGS**

Inserts for the Record (IFRs) identified above in **bold, underlined, italicized font**. To be tasked out in separate correspondence

The hearing concluded at 1745 by CM Hunter, acting CHMN.